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1996

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

FOR THE

ANIMAL CARE

PROGRAM

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

APRIL 1996

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



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Mission of the Animal Care Program: To provide leadership in establishing acceptable standards of humane animal care and treatment and to monitor and achieve compliance through inspections and educational and cooperative efforts.

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to regulating the care of all animals whose well-being has been entrusted to us. Through its Animal Care Program, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) enforces the Animal Welfare and Horse Protection Acts (AWA and HPA), which govern the care and treatment provided to a wide variety of animals.

APHIS constantly evaluates the effectiveness of the agency's AWA and HPA enforcement activities. This report, Strategic Direction for the Animal Care Program, is the result of a critical evaluation undertaken in the fall of 1995. APHIS management convened an internal agency team with oversight from the Administrator's Office to review the program and provide recommendations for improvement. The group's exhaustive review included interviews with numerous people involved in AWA and HPA administration—from field veterinary medical officers who inspect regulated facilities to USDA attorneys who prosecute violators.

This report describes the team's findings. It recommends a course of improvement over the next several years that will bring the program into alignment with the expectations of its customers and new requirements by Congress and the Administration. It embodies the hopes and vision of employees who want to be part of a government that works better, costs less, and feels like a good place to work.

The strategic direction contained in this document responds to several issues facing the Animal Care Program: the protection of dogs raised in commercial breeding facilities; the theft of pets for use in research; the effectiveness of performance-based care standards and research facilities' internal oversight committees; problems with certain animals used for public exhibition; the possible need to establish care standards for farm animals, rats, mice, and birds; and the need to ensure continued care for former research chimpanzees; as well as several issues facing the Horse Protection Program.

The report includes both initiatives currently under way in the Animal Care Program as well as recommended strategies for program improvement. The recommendations cover such areas as statutory and regulatory authority, the AWA inspection system, enforcement activities, educational efforts to improve compliance, employee needs, and innovative use of resources. The strategies adhere to the following tenets:

- Enhance statutory, regulatory, and procedural authorities.
- Provide proactive leadership in establishing acceptable practices of animal care and treatment.
- Maximize resources for enhanced program delivery and efficiency.
- Respond to external concerns and expectations through objective action.
- Empower, support, and develop employees.

Implementation of the strategies will be carried out through eight employee teams whose accomplishments will be integrated by an initiatives coordinator.

Many of the strategies embody Reinventing Government initiatives and elements of the APHIS Vision. Eliminating regulatory barriers, sharing resources within and outside the agency, partnering, using risk assessment in prioritizing work activities, working with the industry to encourage self-regulation and compliance, empowering and better equipping employees, involving the public, and improving customer service are all important elements of the team's recommended strategies. The Animal Care Program had already begun pursuing many of these goals. To cite a few examples, APHIS is currently sponsoring new legislation and promulgating regulations, conducting research and evaluation projects, trying program innovations of various kinds, and participating in task forces and cooperative efforts with industry.

USDA is proud of its accomplishments in the area of animal care. We recognize that the Animal Care Program will likely continue to be challenged by issues related to resources, media interest, and public concerns. We believe the strategies described in this report will help prepare the Department to address these challenges and further USDA's role as a leader in animal care issues.

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I. Introduction

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to carrying out its responsibilities and meeting public expectations in its enforcement of the Animal Welfare and Horse Protection Acts (AWA and HPA). The Regulatory Enforcement and Animal Care (REAC) unit of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) administers these laws. This paper describes the action steps APHIS is taking to meet the current and future challenges facing the Animal Care Program. The goal is to achieve an effective system of AWA and HPA enforcement that maximizes the use of APHIS resources in carrying out program mandates.

The way that APHIS fulfills its mission is changing. The APHIS Vision, developed in 1995 with participation from REAC, describes many of the improvements the agency will strive to achieve over the next several years. The Vision contains elements in the areas of customers, global interests, the environment, leadership, partnership, valuing people in the workplace, science and technology, innovative regulatory roles, and communication and marketing. REAC shares this vision of the future and is committed to making it real by giving strategic direction to its programs.

AWA Administration

HPA administration is discussed separately in Section IV.

REAC ensures compliance with the AWA by conducting inspections of regulated facilities. Veterinary medical officers and animal care inspectors stationed nationwide work out of their homes and inspect all of the facilities in their designated areas. Altogether, this field force of approximately 74 inspectors oversees the care of animals in approximately 13,000 regulated sites. In carrying out the program mission, REAC staff must deal with the competing needs of conducting in-depth and frequent inspections. Therefore, this minimal personnel resource has created a trade-off situation. This issue is addressed in the strategic plan under the tenet "Maximize resources for enhanced program delivery and efficiency," which begins on page 12.

APHIS strongly believes in the importance of using education and interaction with the regulated industry to achieve high levels of compliance. However, because of limited fiscal resources, REAC education efforts have been minimal in recent years. Most current education efforts take place between an Animal Care inspector and a regulated individual at the time of an inspection.

When an Animal Care inspector determines a facility is in violation of the AWA regulations and standards, a Regulatory Enforcement investigator conducts an investigation and documents an alleged violation case. Depending upon the severity of the violation, the case may be referred to USDA's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) for prosecution. APHIS prepares press releases on cases that OGC prepares for prosecution.

Resource History

This section provides a brief description of the resource availability and use in the Animal Care Program. For more detailed information, see Appendix A.

APHIS created the Animal Care Program as a separate unit within the agency in 1988 to give the program appropriate visibility and attention. Congressional appropriations for the program expanded rapidly from 1989 to 1991, and staffing levels were increased during that same time to cover new work activities that resulted from legislative amendments. Program funding has remained stable in nominal terms since 1991.

Personnel compensation and benefits are the largest Animal Care program cost categories. Consequently, the increased staffing in 1989-91 limited the funding available for program delivery, vehicle and equipment purchases, and training. By fiscal year (FY) 1994, personnel salary and benefits were accounting for as much as 93 percent of the net funds available to the program.

To reverse the adverse impact of these high personnel costs, staffing levels were reduced significantly between FY94 and FY95. These staff reductions have freed up discretionary resources that can now be used for fieldwork and needed investments in vehicles, equipment, and education. Whereas in FY94 only 7 cents of every program dollar were left over for the purchase of nonpersonnel services and goods, this discretionary portion of the budget will increase to 18 cents per dollar in FY96. This adjustment in spending priorities will allow achievement of a far more effective mixture of personnel and other expenses.

To facilitate service delivery, the Animal Care Program is also looking at new ways of streamlining and cross-utilizing resources within APHIS. A new emphasis is being placed on industry education and voluntary compliance and on closing gaps in critical areas, such as the class B dealers. In order to focus inspection resources where the risks are greatest, Animal Care will reduce the frequency of inspections at facilities that are participating in a voluntary industry certification or accreditation program and whose past inspection records show favorable compliance. With the future resource picture limited, as it is for all domestic programs, the program can no longer think in terms of doing more with more money; rather, the program needs to change the way business is done.

Establishment of the Animal Care Strategic Planning Team

To ensure the Animal Care Program is operating as efficiently as possible, APHIS constantly evaluates the agency's efforts and looks for methods of improvement. In September 1995, APHIS management convened a strategic planning team to provide recommendations to help improve AWA enforcement and put more resources in the field. The Animal Care Strategic Planning Team included employees of the APHIS REAC and support units with oversight from the APHIS Administrator's Office. Representatives of other APHIS and USDA divisions were called upon during the team's deliberations to provide expert opinions as needed.

The group reviewed all aspects of USDA's administration of the AWA, including the current statutory authority and regulations; education and compliance initiatives; inspection procedures; law enforcement activities; technological, scientific, and employee needs; and resources. The team used this review to identify barriers to success and develop ways to eliminate or minimize the problems. The team's recommendations, which are described in sections III and IV, include concrete action items that will help the Animal Care Program operate more effectively and be more responsive to public concerns.

For more detailed information about this team and the methodology it used in developing recommendations, see Appendix B.

II. Current and Future Issues Facing Animal Care

The Animal Care Strategic Planning Team began its work by identifying current and future issues facing the Animal Care Program. The team then referred to this list as they developed their recommendations.

Current Issues

Dog breeders. A major issue, known as the "puppy mill" issue, involves whether USDA is providing adequate protection under the AWA for dogs raised in commercial breeding facilities. USDA has received much correspondence on this issue, including recent congressional letters with multiple signatories advocating the establishment of more stringent standards for the care of such dogs and stronger enforcement of the current standards.

Research. Animal welfare organizations have raised concerns about several issues regarding the use of animals in research.

—**Pet theft.** A primary concern pertains to the continual perception and allegations of theft of pet dogs and cats for eventual use in research.

—**Oversight.** Another issue surrounds the effectiveness of Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC's) in overseeing research. Research facilities are required to establish these committees as self-enforcement entities as a result of the 1985 amendments to the AWA.

—**Care standards.** In carrying out the 1985 AWA amendments, APHIS developed performance-based standards for almost all areas. Unlike "design" or "engineering-based" standards, which have specific baseline requirements, the AWA performance-based standards provide criteria to allow the institution's attending veterinarian, IACUC, and APHIS Animal Care inspectors to exercise professional judgment, based on the needs of a species, in determining the specific needs of an animal and whether a facility is in compliance. Controversy still exists in the public sector as to whether the AWA performance-based standards allow for fair and effective enforcement of the law.

Exhibit animals. Problems exist with the use of exotic animals and marine mammals for public exhibition and entertainment purposes—from the standpoint of both the welfare of the animals and the safety of the public. For example, the media have broadcast recent alarming episodes involving circus elephants that have gotten out of control during performances.

Future Issues

APHIS is looking ahead to future challenges to the Animal Care Program and is considering ways to deal with them. While APHIS has dealt with past and current animal welfare issues from its vantage point as a Federal regulatory agency, the strategic planning team believes USDA's role in regard to the following representative issues should be as a leader in developing education initiatives. USDA should continue to raise the level of public awareness and sensitivity to animal care issues, coming out in front of these issues and working with industry and the public to find solutions to any problems.

Farm animal welfare. By 1999, the European Union (EU) will require that countries exporting livestock and meat to EU nations have comparable standards in place regarding the raising of food animals. As a result of this economic pressure and concerns being raised by animal welfare organizations in this country, APHIS believes USDA must take the lead in establishing recommended care guidelines for the livestock industry to follow.

Research chimpanzees. Because of the endangered status of chimpanzees, those used in research may not be euthanized once they are too old to be used effectively. As a result, the research community has voluntarily required endowment funds to be established to ensure the continued care of former research chimpanzees. The current endowment funds are not sufficient to meet the animals' needs.

Broader species coverage under the AWA. Pressure on USDA to include additional species, including rats, mice, and birds, under AWA regulation will likely continue.

Exhibit animals. The team foresees a growing movement to ban certain types of animal exhibition, especially that involving exotic and potentially dangerous animals, such as elephants.

III. Improvement Initiatives

To keep their efforts focused, the Animal Care Strategic Planning Team developed the following tenets to guide them as they worked:

- Enhance statutory, regulatory, and procedural authorities.
- Provide proactive leadership in establishing acceptable practices of animal care and treatment.
- Maximize resources for enhanced program delivery and efficiency.
- Respond to external concerns and expectations through objective action.
- Empower, support, and develop employees.

This section describes ongoing initiatives and strategies to accomplish these goals.

By pursuing these tenets or goals, the Animal Care Program will be fulfilling the APHIS Vision, Reinventing Government, and meeting the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the purpose of which is to improve the confidence of the American people in the capability of the Federal Government by holding Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results. The program will be leading the way in anticipating and responding to issues involving animal well-being and becoming customer driven by addressing complaints voiced by Members of Congress and the public. Animal Care will follow the principles of regulatory reform by "getting out of Washington" and creating grassroots partnerships with people affected by the regulations. It will design and deliver services tailored to meet the ever-changing needs of its traditional and new customers. Through open communication and collaboration, the program and its partners will work to further mutual goals. It will use progressive outreach to exchange information with external customers and market the benefits of the program and its mission. It will survey frontline employees on barriers to and ideas for matching the best in the business. By partnering with State and Federal agencies, Animal Care will be operating in a way consistent with a National Performance Review (NPR) initiative to remove restrictions on cross-agency activities that are in the public interest.

To ensure science-based policy and decisions, Animal Care will identify, acquire, apply, develop, transfer, and facilitate the use of modern technologies and scientific and analytical methods, including forecasting, risk analysis, and state-of-the-art information management systems. The Animal Care regulatory systems will be unified, user friendly, consistent, technologically advanced, and responsive to public need. The Animal Care Program will have performance indicators to be used in measuring relevant outputs, service levels, and outcomes of each program activity. There will be a basis for comparing actual program results with performance goals. By improving quality and basing program decisions on risk, Animal Care will follow the spirit of the quality revolution and the 1993 Executive Order on Risk Analysis.

Managers of the Animal Care Program will further empower employees to focus on results, take responsibility, and learn from experience. By cooperating across APHIS unit lines, Animal Care will be helping APHIS adjust to the effects of streamlining imposed by the budget crisis and will be following the principles of One APHIS. By addressing employee needs, the Animal Care Program will be giving Federal workers the tools they need to do their jobs and enhancing the quality of work life, forming a labor-management partnership as associates and investing in greater productivity. By equipping them with better computers, the program will be following the spirit of NPR's reengineering initiative on electronic government. Finally, Animal Care will be developing competent, flexible professionals who undergo continual learning and are prepared to satisfy customer expectations.

A. Tenet: Enhance statutory, regulatory, and procedural authorities.

Ongoing Activities

APHIS is currently trying to specify additional legal authority under the AWA that would enhance the agency's effort to meet the intent of the legislation to protect regulated animals. Working in conjunction with USDA's Office of the General Counsel (OGC), APHIS has prepared a legislative proposal that would make explicit USDA's statutory authority. This legislative package is currently in executive branch clearance channels. In addition, APHIS is in the process of proposing several AWA regulatory amendments. Completion of these proposals for publication in the Federal Register is one of the agency's highest priorities.

Highlights of the proposed amendments. The sought-after legislative and regulatory changes would greatly increase APHIS' ability to respond to the current issues facing the Animal Care Program. Among the requested statutory authorities is the power to deny AWA licensure to persons not in compliance with the Act or those convicted of violating any animal welfare law—Federal, State, or local. The proposed regulatory changes would improve the lives of dogs raised in commercial breeding facilities and help to prevent the theft of pets for sale to research facilities, among other changes.

For a complete listing of the proposed statutory and regulatory amendments, see Appendix C.

Negotiated rulemaking. As a result of the 1994 amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which gave USDA the total responsibility for regulating the care of captive marine mammals, APHIS is in the process of developing appropriate regulations. Negotiated rulemaking is being used in this effort to give REAC access to the best available expertise on marine mammal care. The first meeting took place in September 1995. Following that meeting, APHIS developed a draft document and distributed it at the second meeting, which took place in spring 1996. A line-by-line review was conducted at that session, and a consensus was reached on certain proposed changes. APHIS believes the result of this effort will be the development of fair and effective standards.

Strategies for Improvement

To further enhance REAC's statutory, regulatory, and procedural authorities, the strategic planning team recommends that REAC management adopt strategies related to getting input from field employees, revising forms used in the inspection process, and improving enforcement activities through several changes.

Field input. Because field employees are in an excellent position to provide valuable input as to whether proposed statutory and regulatory changes are feasible and will be effective, REAC management needs to develop an internal review mechanism to get input from the field. After considering this input, the program should make legislative recommendations in its annual report to Congress.

Forms revision. The inspection process would become more efficient through the revision of several forms, including the AWA inspection form, the annual report of research facilities, and the applications for AWA licensure and registration. The forms need to be automated, made more customer-oriented and professional, and changed to capture measurement criteria as outlined in GPRA. These changes would not only make conducting inspections easier for the Animal Care inspectors but also serve to educate the regulated parties.

Quality cases. Enforcement activities would be improved through enhanced submission of quality cases. Well-documented cases with photographs have the best chances of successful prosecution. To accomplish this goal, appropriate training must be provided to all inspectors and investigators as well as continued encouragement from top management.

Innovative case prosecution. In prosecuting cases, REAC needs to seek greater penalties within the existing statutory limit, perhaps increasing the requested amounts of civil penalties by 5 percent a year. The program also needs to continue its recent use of an innovative regulatory process that involves requesting that decisions and orders, consent agreements, and stipulation agreements include a provision requiring a portion of the fine to be used for benefiting the welfare of animals. Moreover, any license suspensions should continue until the facility is in compliance and the penalty has been paid.

B. Tenet: Provide proactive leadership in establishing acceptable practices of animal care and treatment.

Ongoing Activities

REAC believes in the importance of establishing and maintaining partnerships and working relationships to help achieve animal well-being. Effective communication is fundamental to such relationships. REAC has several initiatives under way that demonstrate USDA's leadership in the animal care arena. These activities pertain to assessments of AWA activities, effective enforcement, and a formal mechanism for responding to animal welfare issues and concerns.

Reports of research facilities. USDA's annual report to Congress reports the numbers of animals used in research based on the extent to which they were exposed to pain. At the time the current categories were developed, a major concern was simply that appropriate pain-relieving drugs would be used on animals undergoing surgical procedures. The state of the art has progressed substantially since then, and animal welfare advocates and the research community have requested an evaluation to determine if better pain-classification categories could be developed. In collaboration with Tufts University, an independent focus group has been formed that will present a recommendation to REAC on one or more options for new or revised categories.

Research oversight. Under the AWA, every USDA-registered research facility is required to have an IACUC, whose purpose is overseeing the research activities and ensuring compliance with Federal regulations. Animal advocacy groups suggest that giving such a responsibility to what are primarily internal committees presents a conflict of interest, paramount to "having the fox watching the henhouse." In collaboration with APHIS and other organizations, the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare (SCAW), a private organization, is conducting an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of IACUC's to determine if they are satisfying the intent of the AWA.

Innovative sanctions. In a recent highly publicized case, APHIS prosecuted a university for various violations, many of which would not have happened had the university had a properly functioning IACUC. As part of the case settlement, the university is required to spend at least \$5,000 to sponsor a conference on IACUC's for the biomedical research community. The idea behind this innovative regulatory response is to help prevent similar situations from occurring in the future. In a similar consent agreement that resolved another recent case, a zoo agreed to pay \$25,000, half of which goes to the U.S. Treasury and half to AWA training for zoo employees or facility improvements.

Partnering. APHIS is a member of the USDA Animal Well-Being Task Force, a Department-level group looking at emerging animal welfare issues, both domestic and global. APHIS is also working with the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and other commodity and animal protection groups on animal care issues. A "regulatory affairs" session held at the 1995 USAHA meeting was very successful. If formed, a permanent committee could possibly recommend regulatory solutions to animal welfare issues.

Strategies for Improvement

To further establish REAC's role as a leader in animal care, the strategic planning team recommends that REAC continue both internal and external evaluations to measure program progress and effectiveness, educate regulated parties and interest groups about the AWA requirements and the importance of compliance, and recognize those regulated entities that maintain an exceptional level of compliance.

Regulation of research. REAC should continue to work with SCAW to evaluate the operational effectiveness of IACUC's. In addition, the program needs to complete the development and pilot-testing of an approach to determine the effectiveness of the AWA performance-based standards. Headquarters should survey field employees and industry and use a team approach in conducting these evaluations. Afterward, guidelines and policies can be developed to assist field inspectors in conducting inspections.

Industry education. APHIS should conduct industry-specific training sessions at both industry meetings and in locations arranged by the agency. After identifying industry meetings to attend, APHIS needs to identify individuals with training skills and establish a national-level training team. This team would develop curricula, including standardized slide sets and scripts, for use by regional training teams. This team would also form a "speakers bureau" for appearances at national, regional, and local industry meetings. If possible, in addition, attendance at training sessions could be linked to enforcement actions, e.g., in lieu of paying a stipulation, a violator would attend a class.

Incentive system. In conjunction with industry, REAC should develop a recognition system for facilities that have an exceptional history of compliance, thereby providing a positive incentive for the AWA inspection system. Such a recognition system could be developed into a certification system. REAC also needs to review existing industry certification programs, work with the organizations to enhance their standards, and then formally recognize appropriate programs.

C. Tenet: Maximize resources for enhanced program delivery and efficiency.

Ongoing Activities

To help make the most effective use of the program's resources, REAC has established several important partnerships.

USAHA. The Animal Welfare Committee of USAHA, in consultation with REAC, has developed a document that individual States can use as "model" legislation for drafting State-level animal welfare laws. The idea is to have more uniform State laws that will complement the AWA. Such consistency would further the concept of Federal-State partnership by contributing to the best utilization of Federal and State animal care resources.

AKC. In carrying out its primary function of registering purebred dogs, the American Kennel Club (AKC) conducts identification and records inspections at the premises of breeders. In the process, AKC inspectors often find individuals who are not USDA licensed and need to be or licensed facilities that are poorly maintained. REAC has initiated contacts with AKC to develop cooperative working relationships and exchange of information regarding possible unlicensed dealers as well as USDA licensees who are not in compliance with the AWA.

State of Missouri. REAC also has a memorandum of understanding with the State of Missouri, which administers its own animal welfare program including inspections of the many commercial breeding facilities that exist in the State. So as not to duplicate inspection efforts, REAC provides the State with copies of all APHIS inspection reports of dealer and breeder premises in Missouri. The State informs REAC of anyone conducting regulated activities without a license and other pertinent information.

Strategies for Improvement

To help REAC maximize resources, the strategic planning team recommends strategies pertaining to risk assessment, teaming, enhanced enforcement activities, and office consolidation.

Risk assessment. REAC needs to identify current and emerging problem areas (e.g., class B dealers selling for research purposes) and concentrate resources in those areas. More specifically, REAC should prioritize the inspection workload and concentrate resources at substandard facilities. Devising and implementing a risk-based approach to inspections will help to focus efforts on the facilities that need the most oversight. Quality, not quantity, should be emphasized in conducting inspections.

Teaming. REAC needs to formalize a multidisciplinary team approach to conduct inspections of problem facilities and identify areas where other APHIS resources could be used to carry out certain Animal Care functions, thereby freeing up animal care personnel to concentrate on the highest priority activities. For example, Animal Care needs to involve Regulatory Enforcement personnel as soon as an "incident" occurs and should pursue the possibility of having APHIS Veterinary Services (VS) and Plant Protection and Quarantine inspectors conduct certain inspections. Where possible, help should be solicited from APHIS retirees, State agencies, and other sources.

Enhanced enforcement. To maximize enforcement resources, REAC needs to make better use of existing enforcement tools, such as summary license suspensions, subpoenas, injunctive relief, and confiscation, in resolving AWA violations and utilize local, State, and other Federal agencies' jurisdictions and enforcement authorities when it is advantageous to do so.

Consolidation. REAC is currently developing consolidation plans to combine its Animal Care Northeastern and Southeastern Regional offices in Annapolis, MD, in mid-1996. A similar consolidation of the Central and Western Regional offices will take place as part of the APHIS regional consolidation plan. These consolidations should ultimately result in a net reduction of three positions, including a GM-14 Regional Director. This reduction would allow the number of field inspectors to increase within current resources. REAC should also move two positions from the headquarters staff to the consolidated regions. The three remaining staff positions would mainly develop new regulations and respond upwardly to requests for information.

User fee authority. USDA should request that Congress authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to prescribe and collect fees for certain services provided by REAC. Such legislation would shift the burden of paying for AWA activities from the general public to the regulated entities who receive these services and will result in increased responsiveness to program priorities. Fees would be adjusted on an equitable basis taking into consideration the type and nature of the operations to be licensed or registered.

D. Tenet: Respond to external concerns and expectations through objective action.

Ongoing Activities

REAC understands the importance of providing timely and thoughtful responses to concerns expressed by the industry, public, Congress, and other interested parties. The Animal Care Program's recently developed customer service plan maintains a policy that responding to public complaints is a top priority.

The APHIS Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) staff has developed a public affairs plan for the Animal Care Program to be fully implemented in FY96. REAC and LPA have also joined efforts to ease dissemination of documents requested under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). As a first step, the REAC regional offices now may directly release certain documents to requesters without first sending the copies to the LPA-FOIA staff for review.

Strategies for Improvement

To help REAC improve its responsiveness to external concerns, the strategic planning team recommends that the Animal Care Program hold public meetings and conduct focus groups to obtain public input, educate the industry about AWA regulations and policies, and better publicize program accomplishments.

Public meetings. REAC recently held three public meetings to determine public and industry expectations on the regulation of commercial dog breeders and other issues. The first two meetings were held in Kansas City, MO, on February 21 and 22, 1996, and in St. Louis, MO, on February 23 and 24, 1996. The third meeting took place in Washington, DC, April 10 and 11, 1996. Prior to the meetings, APHIS placed a notice in the Federal Register; notified USDA licensees and registrants, State agencies, interested organizations, and some Members of Congress; and issued press releases. A total of 750 people participated in these meetings.

Focus groups. Similarly, REAC will continue to conduct focus groups or use related research techniques to get a balanced idea of public concerns about animal welfare. In collaboration with Tufts University, REAC is currently using this data-gathering method to evaluate USDA pain-classification categories for research animals.

Information dissemination. REAC plans to provide to regulated parties and the public the same information provided to Animal Care inspectors, e.g., what to measure during an inspection, new requirements and policies, regulation changes, and proposed rules. The program will publish policy changes and other general information in industry newsletters and electronic media. Internet use should increase, including expanding the REAC home page on APHIS' Worldwide Web site and the use of certain existing news and discussion groups. Topics on VS' Voice Response System (a toll-free telephone number that provides information on transporting animals) could be expanded.

Outreach. REAC also needs to work with APHIS-LPA on proactive outreach, doing a better job of publicizing successful case resolutions and human interest stories involving REAC employees or pertaining to program activities.

E. Tenet: Empower, support, and develop employees.

Strategies for Improvement

To fulfill goals of the APHIS Vision pertaining to meeting employee needs, the strategic planning team recommends that REAC management identify and fulfill employee training and equipment needs, develop career advancement paths, better utilize the work teams of field employees, and improve information exchange with them.

Training. REAC management needs to prioritize training needs for Animal Care employees, including computer skills, professional development, and how to use the new inspection forms. After identifying needed core competencies for interpersonal skills, courses should be identified to improve skills in conflict management, communication, and interpersonal relations. At a national work conference for Animal Care employees (to be held April 29 to May 3, 1996), agenda items should cover the importance of customer service; conducting quality inspections, including reviewing IACUC functions and training; a session on interpersonal skills; and sessions on the revised inspection forms. An internal training team should develop a protocol and guidelines for training new employees, especially through on-the-job training.

Employee certification. REAC management needs to evaluate the proposed idea of establishing an internal field specialty program. This program would involve field personnel designing their own certification programs in specific areas, such as expertise on a particular species, nutrition, or air transport.

Equipment. New laptop computers and printers have been ordered for all field personnel. An assessment of future hardware and software needs should be coordinated with the LARIS (Licensing and Registration Information System, a centralized database) Users Team. Using field input, REAC needs to prioritize other program equipment needs. REAC management needs to compare this list with available funding and set priorities and a timetable for acquisition.

Career advancement. Management should develop new career advancement paths for field employees. This effort should include developing individual development plans, making better use of the APHIS LEAD program (a professional development course), and expanding workforce and succession planning.

Communication. REAC headquarters needs to improve communication with field employees, including providing periodic updates on change initiatives within APHIS and on current issues "inside the Beltway," such as political influences affecting the Animal Care Program. Field employees should be provided with information and feedback involving cases in their area. Where possible, field employees should be involved in decisions affecting facilities in their area and involved in industry education efforts and professional meetings in their area.

IV. The Horse Protection Program

Background

Enacted by Congress in 1970, the HPA prohibits the sale, auction, or exhibition of sore horses. The Tennessee Walking Horse has been the breed most frequently targeted for soring, a painful procedure used to accentuate a horse's gait. Statutory amendments in 1976 directed USDA to work with the horse show industry to eliminate soring, to prevent sored horses from being transported in commerce, and to ensure appropriate penalties for violators. Based on the 1976 amendment, USDA developed a system, called the Designated Qualified Person (DQP) program, under which certain horse industry organizations (HIO) are certified by APHIS to train and license individuals to detect sore horses. Managers of horse shows, sales, auctions, and exhibitions are responsible for hiring DQP's to examine animals for soreness and other requirements set forth in the Horse Protection regulations.

APHIS inspectors monitor the DQP program by conducting unannounced inspections of selected horses at shows throughout the country. Each year, about 500 Tennessee Walking and Racking Horse shows/sales are held in approximately 20 States. Available resources have allowed about 50 shows/sales to be attended by APHIS inspectors.

To obtain an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the agency's HPA enforcement activities and identify areas for improvement, APHIS last year established an independent, external review committee that included representatives from various humane organizations, HIO's, academia, and veterinary medical professional associations. As recommendations are developed by the committee, APHIS officials evaluate them and, where appropriate, integrate them into the HPA enforcement procedures. Concerns expressed by the committee include possible inconsistencies in HPA enforcement across the country and discrepancies in the sanctions imposed by APHIS and the HIO's.

APHIS has taken steps to ensure that USDA enforcement of the law is fair and equitable. Working in conjunction with the industry, APHIS recently developed uniform examination guidelines and a checklist to improve the inspection process and procedures currently being used by DQP's. In addition, APHIS officials are continuing to work with the certified HIO's to develop a fair and uniform national penalty system for violations of both the organizations' bylaws and the HPA. If the industry carried out a harmonized penalty system, APHIS would not need to impose separate sanctions, thereby reducing the costs and time involved in pursuing enforcement through the Federal administrative law process.

Such an achievement is especially important in light of the current and anticipated funding situation for the Horse Protection Program. As for all domestic programs, the future resource picture for HPA administration is limited, so the program must look at new ways of partnering with industry and cross-utilizing resources within APHIS to facilitate service delivery. Program personnel must also look at closing gaps in critical areas.

Current Issues and APHIS Responses

There are three major issues currently facing the Horse Protection Program—the increased reliance on DQP's to ensure compliance with the law, the growth of unaffiliated shows, and the use of thermography in conducting HPA inspections.

Use of DQP's. The primary issue in the Horse Protection Program involves the increased reliance on DQP's to perform HPA inspections and ensure compliance with the law. Animal welfare groups and some segments of the horse industry believe the use of DQP's presents a conflict of interest. However, the DQP program is consistent with the Department's regulatory reform efforts.

APHIS is working with the seven USDA-certified HIO's that license DQP's to evaluate and improve our HPA enforcement policies and look at our regulatory language. APHIS is also working with the industry in such areas as training formats, continuing education programs, and internal issues within the certified organizations as they relate to the HPA.

Unaffiliated shows. Many organizations conduct shows (usually small) without affiliating with one of the seven USDA-certified DQP organizations and, therefore, do not utilize a DQP program. Although they must still comply with the HPA, some managers and horse exhibitors at these shows do not want USDA inspectors present, and USDA employees attending these shows face possible safety risks. The certified organizations are worried about the growth of unaffiliated shows and want USDA to perform more inspections of them. In December 1995, APHIS held a meeting with REAC inspectors to obtain input and develop recommendations on future APHIS presence at unaffiliated shows.

Use of thermography. In the last 2 years, REAC has received a congressional mandate to study the use of thermography, which involves infrared heat detection, as an additional tool to detect soring of gaited horses during HPA inspections. The gaited-horse industry is resisting such use based on usage in the 1970's when results obtained with the thermographic technology at that time did not always correlate with those obtained through physical examination.

APHIS officials initiated an evaluation of the latest thermographic technology during the 1995 horse show season. They will finish their evaluation by the end of the 1996 horse show season and will make further determinations about the use of thermography based upon the results.

Strategies for Improvement

A. Enhance statutory, regulatory, and procedural authorities.

REAC is currently pursuing a plan to collaborate with the certified HIO's to develop consistent and uniform USDA-approved HIO inspection procedures and noncompliance penalties so that a greater emphasis can be placed on self-regulation of the horse industry through the certified DQP programs. This plan will include specific criteria for suspending the licenses of DQP's and decertifying HIO's that are not effectively administering the HPA. REAC's primary role at affiliated shows will be to monitor DQP performance in order to evaluate the level of HPA enforcement, with a secondary role of documenting blatant violations of the law.

B. Provide proactive leadership in establishing acceptable practices of animal care and treatment.

APHIS needs to develop both a scientifically valid protocol to evaluate the effectiveness of thermography as an enforcement tool and methodology to detect and report sophisticated soring methods. Following these evaluations, APHIS needs to develop appropriate policies and regulations.

C. Maximize resources for enhanced program delivery and efficiency.

APHIS should propose a regulation that would require DQP programs to have an approved sanction system in place in order to be certified. In addition, REAC should change its HPA enforcement focus from conducting inspections of horses at shows and sales to more closely monitoring the DQP's and certified HIO's. Animal Care will develop additional tools to evaluate the DQP's, such as evaluating potential conflicts of interest and auditing the records of the certified organizations. REAC should also pursue documenting formal investigative reports in cases of poor DQP performance.

D. Respond to external concerns and expectations through objective action.

To respond to public concerns about the DQP program, REAC should change its HPA enforcement focus from conducting inspections of individual horses to more closely monitoring the DQP's, as discussed in sections A and C. REAC plans to meet with industry representatives in 1996 to discuss the need to revise the sanction systems, minimize conflicts of interest by DQP's, and agree upon criteria to certify/decertify HIO's as well as criteria to revoke or suspend DQP licenses. In addition, APHIS should propose a regulation that would require DQP programs to have an approved sanction system in place in order to be certified and to show full execution of such a system in order to maintain fully certified status. Finally, REAC will consider increasing the Federal presence at unaffiliated shows and perhaps alter the composition of the inspection teams at these shows based on the success of the HIO self-regulation and availability of resources.

E. Empower, support, and develop employees.

In December 1995, REAC held a national work conference for HPA inspectors to formulate strategic recommendations for improving HPA enforcement. A subgroup has been formed to devise a detailed plan for REAC management to consider prior to the meeting with the industry in 1996. This subgroup will continue to address current and future issues regarding HPA enforcement.

V. Implementation

The Animal Care Strategic Planning Team proposes that APHIS form a series of teams responsible for implementing the strategies described in Sections III and IV.

Representation on the teams would be from various organizational levels within REAC. A work plan of proposed timeframes for carrying out the strategies can be found at Appendix D.

Due to the magnitude and scope of this comprehensive improvement effort, the team further recommends that a temporary (2-year) Initiatives Coordinator position be identified and funded to integrate and coordinate the individual implementation team efforts. Because the implementation teams will need to meet several times, especially at first, and because many of the action items will require a substantial outlay of resources, such as sponsoring public forums, hosting industry meetings, and developing slide sets and scripts, the team recommends that \$250,000 be allocated for the implementation process. During this process, strategy initiatives, progress, and other significant information should be communicated to REAC employees, and others as appropriate, with opportunities for feedback and input.

VI. Conclusion

In summary, the Animal Care Strategic Planning Team's goal was to produce an objective document that was strategic in its outlook and direction and flexible in its content. The team identified responsive program strategies in consideration of both internal and external interests and expectations.

APHIS is cognizant of the tremendous public interest in the Animal Care Program and is committed to deliver services of the highest quality. APHIS can accomplish this goal through a process of open communication, continual program evaluation, responsiveness to changing times, and strong proactive leadership. We welcome the challenges that lie ahead as we focus on continued achievements and advancements in animal care.

Appendix A

Budget History of the Animal Care Program

A. Creation of the Program

In 1988, APHIS created the Animal Care Program¹ and placed it within a separate unit within the agency to give the program appropriate visibility and attention. Congressional appropriations for the program expanded rapidly from 1989 to 1991. Since then, available program funding has remained stable in nominal terms.

B. Increased Responsibilities

Since 1989, the Animal Care Program has been required to undertake new responsibilities. The program's activities have expanded over the years to meet these additional responsibilities, which resulted from legislative and regulatory amendments.

- The 1985 amendments to the AWA greatly increased the responsibility of APHIS for ensuring the well-being of regulated animals. As a result, there was an added burden on the agency to educate the public about and interpret and enforce new minimum requirements for the exercise of dogs; for a physical environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of nonhuman primates; for the establishment of IACUC's to oversee research at research facilities; and for standards to ensure that pain and distress to research animals are minimized. To ensure that regulated persons or establishments were in compliance with the new regulations, APHIS needed to increase monitoring and surveillance. Final rules for the 1985 amendments became effective in March 1991.
- The 1990 Pet Protection Act expanded APHIS' responsibility for the welfare of random source dogs and cats. With this Act, the agency incurred increased monitoring and enforcement costs to ensure compliance with new provisions regarding the holding periods for dogs and cats in public or private pounds, shelters, and research facilities and certification requirements for random source dogs and cats. Regulations enforcing the Act went into effect in August 1993.
- If enacted, pending farm animal regulations, which would further regulate the use of horses and other farm animals used for biomedical or other nonagricultural research, as well as any mandates to expand the requirements for humane treatment of rats, mice, and birds used in research, would further expand the responsibilities of the Animal Care Program.

¹Technically, the budget line item referred to is Animal Welfare. Animal Care refers to a higher aggregation that includes the small Horse Protection Program. Many people prefer the term Animal Care, so we used it throughout.

C. Increasing Costs of Doing Business

Costs incurred by Animal Care Program activities have increased significantly, and the primary sources of these increased costs are personnel related. Personnel compensation and benefits are the largest Animal Care Program cost categories, and these cost increases limited the funding available for program field activities.

Staffing levels were increased in 1989-91 in anticipation of work activities being generated by the new regulatory duties described above. Consequently, by fiscal year (FY) 1994, personnel salary and benefits were accounting for as much as 93 percent of net funds available to the program, leaving little else for carrying out necessary fieldwork and investing in equipment and training needs.

In an effort to reverse the adverse impact of high personnel costs in relation to other costs, staffing levels were reduced significantly between FY94 and FY95 (fig. 1). Despite a reduction in staff (full-time equivalents or FTE's) from previous years, compensation and benefits still accounted for 89 percent of program expenses in FY94. This situation is due, in part, to the large number of new employees hired in 1989-91 who fell under the Federal Employees Retirement System with its significantly higher benefit levels.

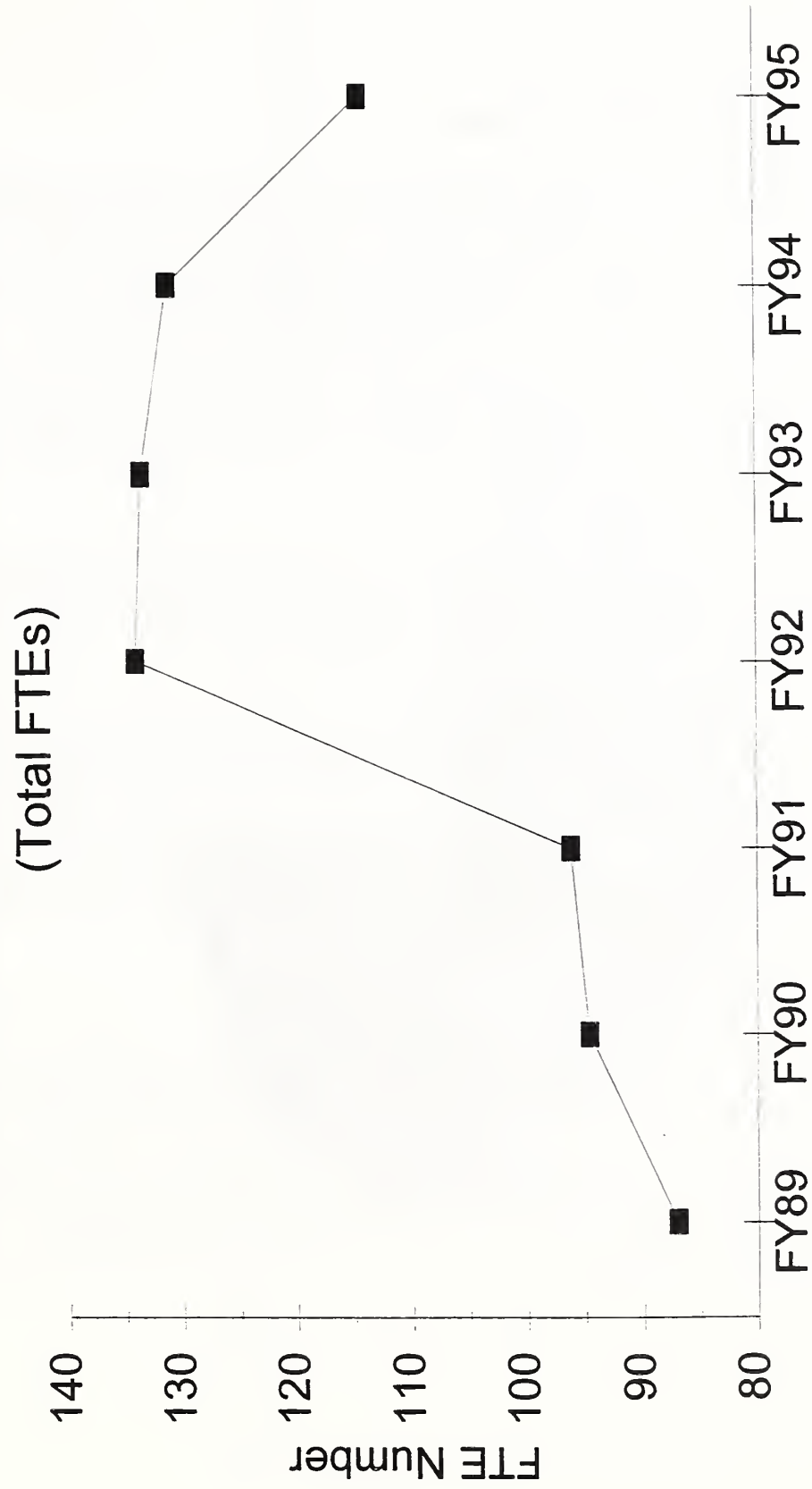
Table 1 compares FY92 and FY95 costs for personnel compensation and benefits. Despite the drop in FTE's from 134 to 114 during this same period, spending for benefits increased \$258,426 or 22 percent, even after adjusting for the effect of inflation. Changes in the number of employees, their average salaries, or employee benefit levels could, therefore, have a significant impact on program total spending.

Table 1
Personnel Compensation and Benefits
Comparison of FY92* vs. FY95 Spending
(Millions, in 1995 \$'s)

<u>Object Classification Code</u>	<u>FY92</u>	<u>FY95</u>	<u>% Change</u>
11 Personnel Compensation	\$5.7	\$5.1	-10
12 Personnel Benefits	\$1.2	\$1.5	+22

* 1992 is the earliest year for which records were available for personnel compensation and benefits.

Figure 1: Animal Welfare Staffing



D. Impact of Budgetary Constraints

The Animal Care field inspectors work out of their homes and use government-owned vehicles as their primary means of transport to field sites. The cumulative impact of inflation, increased real costs, and expanded responsibilities have constrained the program's ability to replace its rapidly depreciating government vehicle fleet. Of the 74 vehicles in inventory, nearly 60 percent exceed the General Services Administration's (GSA) recommended mileage limit for replacement (60,000 miles). Nearly 30 percent of the vehicles have traveled over 160,000 miles (fig. 2). Due to the long distances that must be traveled to conduct site visits and inspections, officers are logging 29,800 miles on average each year. At this rate, vehicles are surpassing GSA's recommended limit nearly every other year.

Similarly, until the recent purchase of laptops and printers for field employees, few significant computer hardware and software acquisitions have been made, largely due to the budget constraints faced by the Animal Care Program, and there has been no formal technical training of Animal Care employees since FY93.

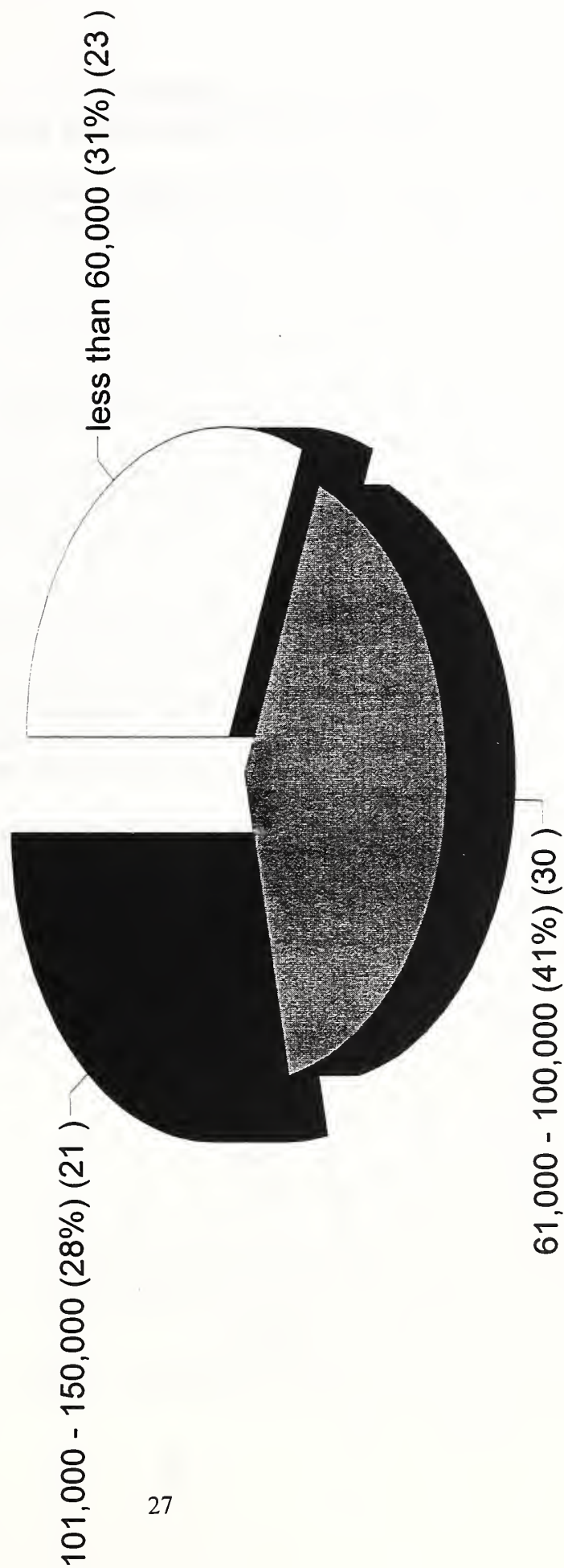
In sum, because budget constraints facing the program were resulting in delays in replacement and acquisition of vehicles and equipment and were restricting the amount of travel and training available for personnel, program activities began to suffer. The impact of these constraints is partly reflected in the 16-percent drop in the number of compliance inspections conducted in FY94 as compared to FY93 levels. With fewer and fewer program dollars to pay for travel, training, and vehicular upkeep, field inspectors were unable to operate with maximum efficiency.

E. Right-Sizing the Program

Staff reductions that took place primarily in FY95 have freed up discretionary resources that can now be used for investments in vehicle fleet upkeep, travel, and educational expenses for both program stakeholders and staff. Whereas in FY94 only 7 cents of every program dollar were left over for the purchase of nonpersonnel services and goods, this discretionary portion of the budget will increase to 18 cents per dollar in FY96, marking a vast improvement over previous years' spending patterns. This adjustment in spending priorities will allow the program's managers to achieve a far more effective mixture of personnel and other expenses.

Figure 2: Animal Welfare Vehicle Inventory

(Mileage for 77 Vehicles, FY95)



Appendix B

The Strategic Planning Team and Its Charge

This document, Strategic Direction for the Animal Care Program, was developed over a period of 3 months by a team of seven APHIS employees designated by Lonnie King, APHIS Administrator. They were

- Terry L. Medley, Associate Administrator, Co-Chair
- Dale F. Schwindaman, Deputy Administrator for REAC, Co-Chair
- W. Ron DeHaven, Animal Care Regional Director for the Western States
- John Kinsella, Regulatory Enforcement Regional Director, Northeastern States
- Sue Gallagher, Program Specialist, REAC
- Sue Wilkinson, Writer–Editor, Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA)
- Natalie Roberts, Management Analyst, Policy and Program Development (PPD).

Their charge was to take a comprehensive look at the current state of the Animal Care Program and the issues facing it and develop a positive and comprehensive roadmap for continued and long-term success and improvement. The document was to be written in a manner appropriate for a broad internal and external audience. It was to adopt a professional approach to overall planning and management of the program and establish goals and priorities for diverse parties to work toward over the next several years. It was also to have certain operational details that would facilitate implementation.

The analysis of Animal Care compliance and enforcement activities and development of strategies proceeded as follows. At the initial meeting, the team identified several general tenets. These management principles were later adopted as the final organizing goals. Next, the team discussed several broad category areas for consideration covering all aspects of the program: statutory changes, regulatory changes, the inspection system, compliance through education, enforcement activities, employees' needs, and innovative resource management. The team identified resource people for each category area and a series of questions about current issues for the people to address. The resource people included representatives from:

- Office of the General Counsel, USDA
- Legislative Services, LPA, APHIS
- Public Information, LPA, APHIS
- Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS
- Policy Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS
- Planning, Evaluation, and Monitoring, PPD, APHIS
- Risk Analysis Staff, PPD, APHIS
- Organizational and Professional Development, APHIS

- Budget and Accounting Division, APHIS
- Animal Care management, APHIS
- Regulatory Enforcement management, APHIS
- Animal Care veterinary medical officers, APHIS
- Resource Management Staff, REAC, APHIS.

These people were invited to update the strategic planning team members about the issues in their specific areas. The resource personnel provided a variety of input, including current correspondence to and from Congress, legislative proposals, lists of regulations being proposed, results of employee surveys, historical narratives on the budget history and program accomplishments, graphical representations of the resource picture, and information about GPRA.

After this phase, the team discussed whether all the main issues had been identified. It reviewed the APHIS Vision and Change Agenda and identified future issues. For each broad category area, the team developed a general goal statement, brainstormed hindering and helping forces, and identified several things that could be done to move closer to the goal. These items were later developed in more detail with subtasks, responsibilities, and approximate dates for major accomplishments.

A draft plan was checked out with Animal Care Regional Directors, and ideas for implementation teams and coordination linkages were obtained from them. Draft materials on measurable outcomes and linkages to the APHIS Vision and other Reinventing Government efforts were developed.

Finally, all this material was assembled and reviewed. A draft was outlined and revised several times, keeping the narrative short and putting detailed technical material into appendices or other documents.

Appendix C

Proposed Legislative and Regulatory Changes

The following lists include amendments that APHIS is requesting Congress make to the AWA and proposed AWA regulation changes for publication in the Federal Register.

Proposed Legislative Changes

- The authority to deny issuing or renewing a license to any person pleading *nolo contendere* or convicted of violating any Federal, State, or local law pertaining to animal care and treatment or to any person whose license was revoked, suspended, or voluntarily surrendered while in violation of the Act. (Currently, APHIS must issue a new license to an applicant who: 1) submits the appropriate form and application fee; 2) has a facility in compliance with all requirements; 3) is not under an administrative license revocation or suspension period; and 4) had no penalties imposed for violation of State or local animal cruelty laws within the past 12 months. A license renewal must be issued regardless of the suspension or compliance status if renewal is requested with the appropriate fee and annual report within 30 days prior to the license renewal date.)
- The authority to deny issuing or renewing a license on an annual basis to any person who is not in compliance with the AWA regulations or has not paid a civil penalty assessed by the Secretary. (The current situation is described above.)
- The authority to increase temporary license suspensions from 21 to 120 days and refuse license renewal to a licensee whose license has been suspended until that person has been given the opportunity for a hearing. (Currently, 21 days is the maximum period of a summary license suspension without "due process.")
- The ability to use injunctive authority for any violation of the Act, its regulations, or its standards. (Currently, injunctive authority may be used only in situations involving stolen animals or in which the health or safety of an animal is in immediate danger.)
- The authority to require, within 2 years, that dogs and cats used for research purposes be acquired only from: a licensed dealer on whose premises the dog or cat was born or raised, unless such person was not required to be licensed under the AWA; a pound or shelter; or a research facility. (Currently, dogs and cats can be obtained for research purposes from class B dealers who buy and sell non-purpose-bred animals—providing the potential for stolen animals to be involved.)

- The authority to require research facilities to hold animals acquired from other than a licensed dealer for at least 5 days before using them in research or disposing of them. (Currently, research facilities are not required to hold dogs and cats, including those acquired from a pound or shelter, for any period.)
- The authority to require pounds and shelters to keep animal identification and disposition records of dogs or cats sold or donated to research facilities. (Currently, under the provisions of the Pet Protection Act of 1990, pounds and shelters are required to hold dogs and cats 5 days before releasing them to a dealer; however, APHIS has no authority or mechanism for enforcement.)
- The authority to regulate all exotic animal auction sales. (Currently, APHIS regulates only those sales at which dogs or cats are sold.)

Proposed Regulatory Changes

- The revision of the current licensing exemption for persons who sell fewer than 25 dogs or cats born and raised on their premises a year to random source dealers for research purposes. A license exemption would be permitted for individuals who sell fewer than 11 dogs and cats born and raised on their premises a year directly to research facilities.
- The prohibition of random source animal dealers selling for research purposes from operating as contract pounds.
- To further comply with the intent of the 1990 Pet Protection Act, the establishment of a uniform certification statement for random source dealers selling for research purposes that states an animal was obtained from a specific pound or individual and that notification of its possible use in research was provided.
- The establishment of acclimation certification by owners transporting animals by air to place responsibility on the owner for verifying that an animal has the ability to adapt to certain temperatures. (Currently, such certification is required of a veterinary practitioner, who may or may not have prior knowledge of the animal's previous environment and must rely on the owner's information prior to signing the certification statement.)

- The elimination of tethering to individual doghouses by dealers as a means of providing a primary enclosure for dogs.
- The revision of temperature requirements for the indoor housing and transportation of dogs and cats to eliminate long-term exposure to extreme temperature ranges. (Currently, APHIS requires auxiliary fans or air conditioning if the ambient temperature for dogs and cats exceeds 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29.5 degrees Centigrade) for more than 4 consecutive hours because such exposure could cause distress or death.)
- The requirement that primary dog enclosures with wire flooring use wire covered with a coating that protects the dogs' feet and allows for sanitation.
- The establishment of minimum age requirements for the transportation of wild canids and felids to protect the health and well-being of young animals and decrease the risk of disease and death.
- The establishment of specific training and handling requirements for handlers of elephants and other potentially dangerous exotic animals.
- As a result of the 1994 reauthorization of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which clarified APHIS' authority over marine mammals in captivity, the establishment of regulations to cover the care and treatment of dolphins that receive contact with members of the public in "swim-with-the-dolphin" programs.

Appendix D

Animal Care Strategic Work Plans

Part I. Animal Welfare Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL A:	Enhance Statutory, Regulatory, and Procedural Authorities	
Field Input:	Develop an internal review mechanism to get field input on needed statutory and regulatory changes, feedback on work plans, etc.	Ongoing
Inspection Forms:	Revise the inspection form, annual report of research facilities, application for licensing, and application for registration to automate them, make them more customer-oriented and professional, and to capture measurement criteria as outlined in the GPRA.	Oct 96
Sanctions:	As appropriate, request that decisions and orders, consent agreements, and stipulation agreements include a provision requiring that a portion of the fine be used for benefiting the welfare of animals and that any license suspensions continue until the facility is in compliance and the penalty has been paid.	Ongoing
Fines:	Seek greater sanctions, increasing the average amounts of fines within the statutory limit by 5 percent a year.	Ongoing
Quality Cases:	Continue to encourage submission of quality investigative cases and emphasize the importance of documenting inspection reports well, with photos.	Ongoing

Part I. Animal Welfare Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL B: Provide Proactive Leadership in Establishing Acceptable Practices of Animal Care and Treatment		
IACUC's: Work independently and with the SCAW to evaluate the operational effectiveness of the IACUC's and the AWA performance-based standards.		Sep 96
GPRA Measures: Evaluate methods and measurement tools to better assess program results and satisfy GPRA requirements. Develop internal guidelines and policies.		Ongoing
Recognition System: In conjunction with industry, consider development of a recognition system for facilities that have an exceptional history of compliance. Such a recognition system could be developed into a certification system.		Jul 96
Compliance Education: Conduct industry-specific training at both industry meetings and in locations arranged and hosted by APHIS.		May 96

Part I. Animal Welfare Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL C:	Maximize Resources for Enhanced Program Delivery and Efficiency	
Risk-Based Inspection: Devise and implement a risk-based approach to inspections so that efforts are concentrated on the facilities that need the most oversight.		Apr 96
Shared Resources: Share APHIS resources to make sure inspections are done.		Jun 96
Team Approach: Use a team approach to maximize efficiency and effectiveness on policy issues and decisions. For problem facilities and/or high-visibility situations, use a team approach to maximize utilization of internal professional expertise and enhance the decision-making process.		Jun 96
Enforcement Tools: Make better use of existing enforcement tools, such as summary license suspensions, subpoenas, injunctive relief, and confiscation, when trying to resolve AWA violations.		Mar 96
Targeting Enforcement: Identify current and emerging problem areas (e.g., class B dealers) and concentrate resources in those areas.		Ongoing
Cooperation With Other Agencies: Utilize local, State, and other Federal jurisdictions to prosecute cases when it is advantageous to do so.		Ongoing
Move Positions: Move two positions from the Animal Care staff in headquarters to the regional offices.		Jun 96
Consolidation: Reduce Animal Care regional office structure by consolidating the four regional offices into two regional offices.		Mar 96 thru Sep 97
Support Services: Identify areas where other APHIS resources can be used to carry out certain Animal Care functions with the intent of freeing up Animal Care staff to concentrate on higher priorities.		Ongoing
Outside Resources: Use outside resources, such as APHIS retirees and State and local agencies, where possible.		Ongoing

Part I. Animal Welfare Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL D: Respond to External Concerns and Expectations Through Objective Action		
Public Meetings: Hold public meetings to determine public and industry expectations on regulation of commercial dog breeders and other issues.		Feb 96
Issues Research: Conduct focus groups or use similar research techniques to get a balanced idea of public concerns about animal welfare.		Ongoing
Education and Training: Educate inspectors and regulated parties about the new forms and train them in computer skills.		Apr 96
Information: Provide to regulated parties and the public the same information provided to Animal Care inspectors, e.g., what to measure during an inspection, explanations of the revised inspection form, new requirements and policies, regulation changes, proposed rules, etc.		Ongoing
Publicizing: Do a better job of publicizing Animal Care successes, to include prompt reporting on case resolutions, proactive actions taken by Animal Care to improve animal well-being, and positive human interest stories involving Animal Care employees.		Ongoing

Part I. Animal Welfare Program Goals and Action Steps	Target Date
GOAL E: Empower, Support, and Develop Employees	
Equipment: Prioritize equipment needs.	Mar 96
Training Needs: Prioritize training needs and include professional development.	Jun 96
Resource Commitments: Commit the necessary resources for equipment purchases and training and provide strong supportive message from the top.	Ongoing
Involvement: Where possible, involve field employees in decisions affecting facilities in their area.	Ongoing
Internal Communications: Improve headquarters communication with field employees.	Ongoing
Professional Meetings: Involve field employees in industry education efforts and professional meetings in their area.	Ongoing
Field Work Teams: Improve work teams of field employees to give them more support in carrying out their responsibilities.	Ongoing
Coordination: Establish an "Initiatives Coordinator" position to oversee, integrate, and coordinate all of the teams and change initiatives identified in this chart.	Dec 95
Resource Allocation: Allocate the necessary resources (as yet to be determined, but approximately \$250,000) for this overall change effort.	Dec 95

Part II. Horse Protection Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL A: Enhance Statutory, Regulatory, and Procedural Authorities		
Industry Self-Regulation: Develop methods to place greater reliance on the DQP program for industry regulation. This effort should include development of criteria for suspending the licenses of DQP's and decertifying certified organizations.		Mar 96
Predesignated Inspection Teams: Consider, with field input, establishing predesignated inspection teams to work at affiliated and unaffiliated shows.		Prior to 1996 show season
GOAL B: Provide Proactive Leadership in Establishing Acceptable Practices of Animal Care and Treatment		
Thermography Evaluation: Develop a scientifically valid protocol to evaluate the effectiveness of thermography as an enforcement tool.		Oct 96
Detection Methodology: Develop methodology to detect and report sophisticated soring methods and develop appropriate regulations.		Long range
GOAL C: Maximize Resources for Enhanced Program Delivery and Efficiency		
DQP Sanction Systems: Propose a regulation that would require DQP programs to have an approved sanction system in place in order to be certified.		Mar 96
Enforcement Focus: Change the enforcement focus from conducting hands-on inspections, unless necessary, to closely monitoring the DQP's.		Mar 96

Part II. Horse Protection Program Goals and Action Steps		Target Date
GOAL D: Respond to External Concerns and Expectations Through Objective Action		
Industry Meeting: Meet with industry to discuss greater self-regulation, DQP license suspension/revocation, decertification criteria, and the need to revise the sanction system.		Mar 96
Unaffiliated Shows: Consider increasing Federal presence at unaffiliated shows and the composition of inspection teams at these shows.		Oct 96
GOAL E: Empower, Support, and Develop Employees		
National Work Conference: Conduct a national work conference for all HPA inspectors to formulate recommendations for improving HPA enforcement.		Dec 95

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